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Guns seized in major bust

London police allege that an arms dealer may have been operating in the city after prohibited weapons found PAGE 2

Breaking down the budget

Metro deciphers five things you need to know about Finance Minister Jim Flaherty's 'minibus' budget bill tabled on Monday PAGE 4

'I'm black. And I'm gay'

NBA veteran Jason Collins becomes the first male player in a major U.S. professional sports league to come out of the closet PAGE 14

NEWS WORTH SHARING.

Wanted: Some great pickup lines

Western University student Matt Helfand, 22, is calling for students to take action and curb the amount of garbage and household items that piles up as they move out at the end of the school year. Helfand, who just finished his fourth year at Western, will be back in the fall to work toward his master's.

MARK SPOWART/FOR METRO

Annual student garbage dump.

Western student wants more action on recycling used items at year's end

MARK SPOWART
london@metronews.ca

Exams are done, bags are packed, the car is loaded and they're itching to start summer. What about all the furniture and knick-knacks Western and Fanshawe students have collected over the past eight months?

All too often, the answer is kick it to the curb, Matt Helfand says.

"There is no incentive for students who are getting ready to leave to go out of their way to recycle or donate the items they are leaving behind," said Helfand, a Western University student and Toronto native.

Tired of watching couches, lamps, desks and garbage bags pile up along his street, he is ready to take action. The 22-year-old sits on the London Youth Advisory Council and plans to raise the issue next fall. The council is a group of young voices that make non-binding recommendations to city council and other leaders.

Glen Matthews, off-campus housing mediator for Western and Fanshawe, is well aware of the toss-it-and-leave mentality. In the past 10 days, he said, nine filled dumpsters have been hauled out of Fanshawe's Fleming Drive neighbourhood alone.

Things used to be a lot worse, he said.

"We used to get a lot of calls from residents and the city asking us what we were going to do to clean up the garbage."

That was six years ago, before a furniture swap was launched. During swap days, Western will pick up unwanted items and make them available to others. Items left over, usually those that aren't in usable condition, are taken to the dump, Matthews said.

While the program is advertised on campus and through social media, the message isn't getting across, Helfand said.

He's not sure what the solution is, or what his pitch will be later this year, but one thing is certain: What's happening now "is just not working."

"This isn't an individual problem. This is a community problem, and it needs a community solution," Helfand said.

Trash forward

- In Halifax, students at Dalhousie University are encouraged to donate unwanted items to an end-of-the-year garage sale on campus. Proceeds from the sale, more than $6,600 this year alone, are donated to charities. The effort started six years ago.

London police Det. Sgt. Chris McCoy talks Monday at police headquarters about guns and drugs seized during a recent search of a downtown residence. The weapons pictured above include handguns and several rifles. For more pictures, visit metronews.ca. JOHN MATISZ/METRO

Suspected arms dealer in custody: London police

'Very rare' discovery. A dozen firearms were found Friday at a William Street home

JOHN MATISZ
john.matisz@metronews.ca

London police have seized 12 firearms from a downtown home — a massive get that amounts to one-third of the total firearms retrieved last year.

There's a good chance James Douglas, the suspect in the case, is a weapons dealer, police said Monday.

"These (guns are) likely available for other criminals to purchase for use," Det. Sgt. Chris McCoy said. "We're looking at somebody that is a potential gun trafficker here."

The investigation is ongoing. Douglas, a Londoner, is in custody but had not been charged Monday morning.

He was arrested Friday after police served a search warrant about 10:20 p.m. at an undisclosed address on William Street.

They left with weapons valued at upward of $50,000, several hundred rounds of ammunition, more than $13,000 in cash and $5,000 worth of drugs, McCoy said.

The firearms — nine handguns and three rifles — are "military standard," McCoy said.

Half of the weapons are categorized as "prohibited" firearms, which means there is no form of licensing that allows people to use or own them.

The guns' origins are unknown at this time, McCoy says, adding none are registered or listed as stolen in Canada.

McCoy could not say if the "very rare" seize is part of a larger gun problem in the city.

Police targeted the William Street address through information obtained during a Friday afternoon drug bust near York and Richmond streets.

At a glance

Guns seized from a William Street home:

- Six "prohibited" firearms: .45-calibre semi-automatic handgun; .38 special revolver handgun; .44-calibre revolver handgun; .357 magnum handgun; .45-calibre semi-automatic handgun; .40-calibre semi-automatic handgun
- Three "restricted" firearms: 17.9-millimetre semi-automatic handgun; .40-calibre semi-automatic handgun; .45-calibre semi-automatic handgun
- Three "non-restricted" firearms: 5.56-millimetre NATO rifle; 9-millimetre Luger rifle; 7.62 NATO rifle

Underdosing. Health Canada, provinces declined to regulate chemo drugs: Supplier

The president of the company that supplied diluted cancer drugs to London Health Sciences Centre says Health Canada and provincial regulators declined to regulate it.

Marita Zaffiro says Marchese Hospital Solutions never attempted to operate without regulatory oversight and mixed the drugs under the supervision of a licensed pharmacist.

The company went to Health Canada, the Ontario College of Pharmacists and the New Brunswick Pharmaceutical Society to "inquire about the appropriate regulatory approval" before it started sending their products to hospitals, she said.

Her lawyer later clarified that Marchese notified Health Canada in December 2011, after the company won a contract to produce the intravenous drug mixtures.

All three declined to regulate the company, Zaffiro said. So Marchese instituted its own "stringent quality-control measures."

Marchese Hospital Solutions has been under scrutiny since it was discovered that 1,200 patients received watered-down chemotherapy drugs purchased from the company.

Of the patients, 691 were receiving care in London. Four other hospitals in Ontario and one in New Brunswick were affected. THE CANADIAN PRESS

$17.4M prize

London-area retailer sold jackpot winner, OLG confirms

The winning ticket for Saturday's $17.4-million Lotto 6-49 jackpot was sold in the London area, the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation has confirmed.

The winner hadn't claimed the prize as of Monday, and OLG officials didn't know which retailer sold the ticket. The winning numbers were 9-28-35-36-48-49.

Two winning tickets — one in Ajax and one in Toronto — were sold for the draw's second prize. Those ticket-holders will receive $124,408 each. METRO

Sunningdale G&CC

PGA Tour Canada championship coming to London

Some of the best golfers in the country will be in London this fall.

Sunningdale Golf and Country Club has been tapped to host the PGA Tour Canada's championship tournament Sept. 9 to 15.

The weekend will also mark the final competition for players looking to earn Web.com Tour cards. Five cards will be awarded, allowing golfers to join the tour, which is a feeder system for the PGA.

Sunningdale, located on the city's north end, boasts more than 400 acres and two, 18-hole courses. METRO

Pre-season game

Leafs, Flyers to take Budweiser Gardens ice

Tickets will go on sale at 10 a.m. Saturday for a Toronto Maple Leafs vs. Philadelphia Flyers pre-season game at Budweiser Gardens.

The Sept. 15 match comes after a fall 2012 game was ditched because of the NHL lockout.

Tickets range from $65 to $100 and can be bought at Budweiser Gardens, Masonville Place mall, the Western University bookstore or Fanshawe College's Biz Booth.

Tickets bought for last year's game will be honoured, officials said. METRO

Frustrated. 'No more excuses, no more reports, no more waiting': Fontana

Mayor Joe Fontana CONTRIBUTED

Citing frustration with the snail's pace of economic-development projects, Mayor Joe Fontana exerted his authority Monday as the city's top political dog.

"It starts as of today. No more excuses, no more reports, no more waiting. The time for action is now," said Fontana as he addressed staff and members of council's investment and economic prosperity committee.

What had Fontana's blood a little hot was a report delivered to the committee with a status check on 10 significant projects ranging from Fanshawe College's budding downtown campus to developing a fund for medical research.

The mayor's beef: None of the projects had a completion date.

"We need a sense of urgency to get many of these items moving forward," Fontana said.

The mayor acknowledged that, in many cases, work was being done by groups that weren't on hand to answer committee members' questions.

MARK SPOWART/FOR METRO

Charged. Child porn investigations net two arrests, police say

Two men are facing child pornography charges after separate investigations by the London police department's cyber crime unit.

Douglas Parsons, 46, of London, was charged Friday with possession of child pornography, making child pornography available and two counts of accessing child pornography after police searched a Second Street home.

Raymond Scott Tucker, 42, of Mount Brydges, was charged with two counts of accessing child pornography. Those charges, also laid Friday, came after police searched a business on Hargrieve Road in London and a residence in his hometown. METRO

Members of Orchestra London perform alongside area high school students during a recent concert at Sir Frederick Banting Secondary School.
ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

Orchestra London tunes into future

Vision. Plan will push orchestra to new levels, board chair says

This isn't your grandparent's Orchestra London. Or, at least, some of it won't be after a "paradigm-shifting" business plan takes full effect.

The organization made its plan — dubbed "Vision 2020" — final on Monday, submitting it to city hall.

Thick and detailed, the document lists a number of objectives aimed at improving the 50-year-old organization from a programming and financial standpoint. The objectives include enhancing the orchestra's performance space, bringing high-quality travelling shows to the city and partnering with "visual artists."

"Essentially, if I was to sum up our approach, we need to significantly increase the level of engagement … at the grassroots level" and enhance "our role as (a developer) for the performing arts," Joe O'Neill, chair of the orchestra's board, told council's investment and economic prosperity committee.

The new direction comes as the orchestra saw profits plummet from $67,784 in fiscal year 2011 to the $5,330 reported last year.

Part of the plan is to be an educational resource for students, teachers, schools and community groups. It's within those areas that O'Neill believes the most opportunities lie.

Orchestra London reaches out to more than 10,000 students every year, providing 1,000 free tickets to families in need through the city's Children and Youth Network. The organization also provides an additional 1,000 tickets to young musicians who are registered through the Kiwanis Music Festival.

Spreading those kinds of stories as orchestra officials put "shoe leather to the pavement" in search of corporate sponsors is a big part of the new model, O'Neill said.

With the work already underway, the response has been solid, he said.

MARK SPOWART/FOR METRO

Arts and Heritage council

Feedback sought for new website

The London Arts and Heritage councils are looking for feedback as they launch a new website.

People are being asked to voice their opinions by completing a five-question survey at londonculture.ca/culture-survey, weighing in on what the new site should look like and include. The survey is designed for culture organizations, volunteers and the general public. METRO

Charity event

Fundraising gala borrows from cinema classic

Big Brothers Big Sisters of London and Area are gearing up for a James Bond-themed gala. The non-profit's BIG Bash is slated to take over the Western Fair District's Carousel Room on Friday.

The fundraiser starts at 6 p.m. with dinner planned for 7:30 p.m. All proceeds will go toward the agency's mentoring programs.

METRO

Local research may have global impact

Dr. David Spence
CONTRIBUTED

A pair of London doctors are launching a homegrown research project that could have a global impact.

Daniel Hackem and David Spence are trying to figure out why people of African descent are more likely to have high blood pressure.

The doctors, part of Western University's Stroke Prevention and Atherosclerosis Research Centre, have received $100,000 for a two-year study aimed at answering the question and addressing the problem.

The money comes through Stars in Global Health, a program operated by the non-profit Grand Challenges Canada. The program gives money to research efforts that stand to have a wide social impact and feature "bold ideas for humanity."

Spence said the project stems from something he noticed decades ago after opening London's first hypertension clinic. People of African descent, he said, were visiting in high numbers, and he's always wondered why.

Spence and Hackem will conduct the study by working with patients referred to clinics in Nigeria, Rwanda, Kenya and South Africa.

The study's results "should help all patients with high blood pressure that (can't be) controlled by the usual therapy methods," Spence said.

DAVE DE VRIES/FOR METRO

From omnibus to 'minibus'

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty tabled a trimmed-down budget bill Monday that he promised would face the proper parliamentary scrutiny. But the official opposition says the legislation still needs to be chopped up. Here are five things you need to know about the changes.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

1 Tories under fire

The Conservatives faced intense criticism over their so-called "omnibus" budget bill last year, which was stuffed with a laundry list of policy measures. The NDP and the Liberals introduced more than 1,000 amendments to register dismay with both the process and the content.

2 Shedding about three quarters

Flaherty did not acknowledge a link between the criticism last year and the shorter bill this year. This year's legislation comes in at 125 pages, compared with 452 last year.

"So we'll have a minibus instead of an omnibus?" Flaherty joked to reporters after question period Monday.

3 Keeping Canadian jobs for Canadians

After weeks of public outcry over the scarcity of Canadian jobs, changes to the Temporary Foreign Workers program increased the lengths to which employers must go to find Canadian staff before they're allowed to bring in foreign labour.

Employers will no longer have flexibility to set the wages for foreign labour, calling a halt to what was known as the 15 per cent rule, Immigration Minister Jason Kenney told a news conference.

That rule allowed businesses to pay foreign workers up to 15 per cent below median wages, if that's what they were paying Canadians.

The Conservatives are also calling a temporary halt to a program that fast-tracked the ability of some companies to bring in workers from outside Canada through what's known as an accelerated labour market opinion.

4 Trimming down the bureaucracy

Flaherty is also warning of more job cuts in the federal public service.

"We have a lot of duplication of government services. And, as you know, we have a plan which has been set out in the last two budgets to reduce the size of our own spending by something less than five per cent," said Flaherty.

5 Hold the cuts: Budget officer

At the same time, the parliamentary budget officer's latest report is warning that the government's cuts will act as a drag on both job creation and economic growth.

The report predicted the government will announce an even bigger surplus — $3.7 billion rather than $800 million — in the critical 2015-16 year when the Harper government is to face the electorate in a fall vote.

Bangladesh factory. Loblaw to compensate building collapse victims

The only Canadian retailer to publicly acknowledge it used a manufacturer in a poorly made Bangladeshi building that collapsed and killed hundreds last week said Monday it will pay compensation for the families of victims.

Loblaw Inc. — which had some products for its Joe Fresh clothing line made in one of the garment factories in the building — said it aimed to ensure victims and their families "receive benefits now and in the future."

"We are working to ensure that we will deliver support in the best and most meaningful way possible," company spokeswoman Julija Hunter said.

Loblaw will be compensating families of victims of a collapse at a factory supplying its Joe Fresh products. GRAHAM HUGHES/THE CANADIAN PRESS

At least 382 people died after the illegally constructed eight-storey Rana Plaza collapsed in Savar, Bangladesh, on Wednesday. About 2,500 survivors have been accounted for. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Kosovo. Prosecutor calls for law against buying human organs overseas

Ottawa must pass legislation barring Canadians from buying human organs in foreign countries, a Canadian prosecutor who led a landmark case against several traffickers in Kosovo said Monday.

While the commercial trade of human organs is illegal in most countries, there is no law banning Canadians from taking part in so-called transplant tourism, Jonathan Ratel said from Kosovo's capital, Pristina.

"It is not illegal for Canadians to exit their own country and travel abroad to the sub-continent, to Asia, to Africa and to Eastern Europe and purchase organs there on the black market for transplantation and then return home to Canada," he said in a phone interview.

Organ trafficking

"Parliament needs to clearly look at legislation banning (Canadians) from ... engaging in what's called transplant tourism."

Canadian prosecutor Jonathan Ratel

Ratel, who works for the European Union's rule of law mission in Kosovo, brought charges against seven people suspected of running an international organ-trafficking ring that took kidneys from poor donors lured by financial promises. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Growing labour dispute

Alberta courts plan to run despite striking staff

The Alberta government is trying to slam a legal lid on an illegal strike by jail guards that has already boiled over into the province's court system.

The government went to court late Monday afternoon to ask a judge to find the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees in contempt of court for defying a Saturday labour board ruling that ordered Edmonton Remand Centre guards back to work.

The government made the move after provincial sheriffs, court clerks and social workers picketed in Edmonton, Calgary and Lethbridge. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Dismemberment case

Luka Rocco Magnotta to stand trial in fall 2014

The trial of accused killer Luka Rocco Magnotta will begin in September 2014, more than two years after his arrest in the death of university student Jun Lin.

Magnotta appeared on Monday in a Montreal courtroom, where his jury trial was set for Sept. 15, 2014. It is scheduled to last six to eight weeks.

Defence lawyer Luc Leclair requested an earlier start date and even asked the judge whether April 2014 would be a possibility. Justice Andre Vincent replied that nothing was available before September. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Gas blast rocks Prague

A paramedic helps an injured woman after an explosion in downtown Prague, Czech Republic, on Monday. A powerful blast believed to be a gas explosion ripped open an office building in the city centre, injuring at least 35 people and sending shockwaves through the Old Town tourist district. PETR DAVID JOSEK/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CBC exec is Twitter-bound

#careermove. Kirstine Stewart to be Canadian managing director of microblogging service

Kirstine Stewart THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

CBC executive Kirstine Stewart is leaving the public broadcaster for Twitter Canada.

The CBC says the English services boss has accepted a position with the San Francisco-based social media company and is leaving CBC/Radio-Canada immediately.

And in a tweet on Monday, Twitter's recently established Canadian division said Stewart will be its new managing director of Canada.

Stewart has been at the public broadcaster for seven years.

The CBC says a recruitment process to find a replacement for the role of executive vice-president of English services will be launched immediately.

Stewart says she's had some of the happiest moments of her life at the CBC and has been "honoured to represent such an important name to Canadians."

CBC/Radio-Canada president and CEO Hubert T. Lacroix praised Stewart for helping establish the CBC as a "modern public broadcaster" and putting it "in a place of strength."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Now hiring

- Twitter Canada is also looking to hire an account executive and an account manager. For details, check out twitter.com/jobs/positions.

Abuzz about EU bee protections

Protesters dressed as bees gather in Parliament Square on April 26 in London, England. On Monday, the European Union announced plans to restrict the use of three pesticides to better protect dwindling bee populations. The move was cheered by environmentalists, questioned by chemical companies and came after the bloc's 27 nations failed to agree on a common stand. EU Consumer Commissioner Tonio Borg said his agency will override the deadlock and move "in the coming weeks" to restrict three neonicotinoid pesticides on plants and cereals that attract bees. Beekeepers have reported an unusual decline in bees over the past decade, particularly in Western Europe, according to the European Food Safety Authority. It says bees are critically important to the environment, sustaining biodiversity by providing pollination for a wide range of crops and wild plants, including most of the food crops in Europe. DAN KITWOOD/GETTY IMAGES

Montreal

BMO to open tiny bank branches

The Bank of Montreal is launching a plan to open tiny bank branches that will be staffed by just a handful of employees.

Chief executive William Downe says the bank is opening what it calls a "studio" branch next week in a Montreal condo building. The 900-square foot location will have just four employees. Downe says the branch is integrated into the condo development.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

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TSX 12,312.67 (+92.47)

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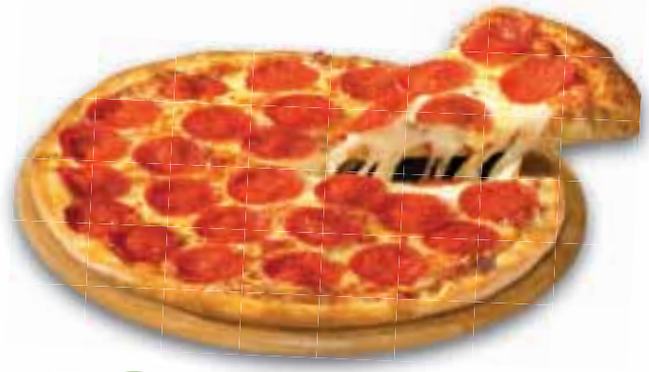

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VOCAL FRYING WITH THE KARDASHIANS

SHE SAYS

Jessica Napier
metronews.ca

Aside from news anchors and a few choice loud talkers on public transit (you know who you are), it seems that most people hate the sound of their own voice.

A common complaint among self-conscious talkers is that the voice inside your head sounds a lot less nasally and annoying than the one other people are hearing in "real life."

You may never really know if your sensual breathy voice actually sounds like a raspy smoker's growl, but that doesn't mean it's not relevant. Like it or not, other people have a habit of making assumptions about attractiveness, intelligence, competency and a variety of other factors based on the sound of your voice.

Researchers at University College London recently conducted a study on human vocal attractiveness in which participants were asked to assess the physical appearance of an unseen speaker based on their speech patterns.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the study proved to uphold some primitive assumptions about heterosexual gender norms. Male participants found high-pitched female voices indicating a smaller body type to be more desirable; the women preferred deep low-pitched male voices signalling a larger and more physically dominant body type.

But while men might instinctually favour female partners with high-pitched voices, many young women have been dipping down the vocal register in recent years and adopting a quirky linguistic trend called vocal fry.

Almost a counterpoint to the rising intonation of Valley Girl up talk, vocal fry is caused by slowly fluttering the vocal cords together to create a low gravelly sound.

This so called "creaky voice" has been popularized by young female celebrities such as Zooey Deschanel and Britney Spears and can be heard among gaggles of teenage girls in Forever 21 fitting rooms across the country.

The Kardashian sisters are especially well known for employing vocal fry to croak out long drawn-out words at the end of their sentences.

Some find this vocal trend grating to the ear, but others argue that women can benefit professionally by purposefully lowering their voices to equalize themselves among male colleagues. New York Times executive editor Jill Abramson is renowned for her distinct guttural vibrato and perhaps it is her low-pitched rattling voice that has helped her become the first female to head the paper in its 160-year history.

When it comes to professional success, the sound of your voice actually matters a lot more than you'd like to think. While studying speeches given by more than 100 business executives, researchers found that the speakers' voice quality accounted for 23 per cent of listeners' evaluations while the actual content of the speech only accounted for 11 per cent.

So next time you open your mouth, remember that it's not necessarily what you say that matters most but how you say it.

Follow Jessica Napier on Twitter @MetroSheSays

ZOOM

When being a crybaby pays off

SHIZUO KAMBAYASHI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

No babies were harmed in the making of this contest

It is a sound that fills most parents with dread, but at the annual Naki Sumo — crying baby contest — in Japan, wailing and screeching is encouraged.

Eager mothers bring the children to the event where Sumo wrestlers and high priests coax babies into a state of distress. No physical pain is inflicted on the babies; the sumo wrestlers instead growl and scowl in order to get a wail.

The 400-year-old event, which marks the high point of spring, is held each year at the Sensoji Temple in Tokyo.

If both babies cry, whichever wails loudest wins.
SHIZUO KAMBAYASHI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Keeping bad spirits at bay

Participating parents believe the Sumo-induced cries are beneficial. The babies are held high, so that their cries are closer to heaven and their mothers pray for their good health. The ritual is also believed to ward off evil spirits.

EXPRESS.CO.UK

Clickbait

HANNAH ZITNER
hannah.zitner@metronews.ca

With live storytelling nights popping up in droves, raconteurs are getting more chances to share their tales face-to-face. But, for those who'd rather get their stories from the comfort of their duvet, here's a list of good listening you can do without getting out of bed.

Themoth.org:

Arguably one of the longest running story telling events, The Moth has been hosting "story slams" since 1997. Though it started it NYC, it's branched out to cities across North America. But for those who a) don't live in a major urban centre or b) just like to tune-in in PJs, the podcast gives you the best of both worlds. @TheMoth

Raconteurs.ca:

Originally launching as a Moth event, Toronto-based Raconteurs set out on their own in early 2012. The monthly night of real-life stories has just one stipulation for its performers: No notes. Tune in by visiting their YouTube channel at youtube.com/raconteurstoronto.

StoryCorps.org

One of the biggest oral history projects in the U.S., StoryCorps records conversations between family and friends to "honour lives through listening." Tune in using their iPhone app or straight from the site. @StoryCorps

Comments

RE: Prof wants to test benefits of nose-picking, published April 24

I think more people do it than we think. And I find it funny that those who don't pick their nose find it so revolting when really it isn't.
Katie, posted to metronews.ca

I'll volunteer my kids. They both do it anyway ...
James Ellis, posted to metronews.ca

Well, I'm not sure about nose picking, but I've been biting my fingernails for my whole life, and I have thought about the same thing. Maybe small bits of germs help keep me healthy over time! I almost never get sick ... But I chew on my nails more than is socially acceptable ...
George Denton, posted to metronews.ca

I hope this professor hasn't applied for and obtained a government grant to do such a study. **NO_MAS_BS, posted to metronews.ca**

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU:
Send us your comments: londonletters@metronews.ca

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DVD reviews

Silver Linings Playbook

Director. David O. Russell

Stars. Bradley Cooper, Jennifer Lawrence, Robert De Niro

●●●●●

David O. Russell's drama of mental health and family discontent steadily becomes a grinner about a dance contest with an outcome worth caring about. Blessed with both Oscar and TIFF wins, it's the best comedy of the past year. It revolves around Pat Solitano (Bradley Cooper), a Philadelphia teacher with anger management issues. He's a regular ray o' sunshine, as long as you don't rile him. He's working on winning back his wife, who left him and now has a restraining order against him. But this strange girl, Tiffany (Oscar-winner Jennifer Lawrence) won't leave him alone. She has mood swings, too, and so does Pat Sr. (Robert De Niro), especially when his beloved Philadelphia Eagles fail on the gridiron. Good thing his devoted wife (Jackie Weaver) keeps him in snacks. Russell has his work cut out for him making sense of this crew, let alone winning our sympathies. But he pulls it off, even if the ending is a little untidy.

Neighbouring Sounds

Director. Kleber Mendonça Filho

Stars. Irma Brown, Sebastiao Formiga, Gustavo Jahn

●●●●○

Do you define the sound of anxiety as the steps of an approaching person, the bark of a restless dog or the din of an incessant music box? How about an upbeat pop song played at a downbeat moment? In Neighbouring Sounds, the feature debut by Kleber Mendonça Filho, it's all of these things and more. The gifted Brazilian writer/director uses sound almost as a character in his film, which won two prizes at the 2012 Rio Film Festival.

PETER HOWELL

Authentic LL Cool J

New album. On the heels of Accidental Racist, veteran rapper talks charts, controversy and always trying to prove himself

LL Cool J says Accidental Racist, his collaboration with Brad Paisley, was misunderstood. GETTY IMAGES

Rap legend LL Cool J is about to release his first album in five years, but he's been in the news lately for an entirely different reason: his controversial Accidental Racist collaboration with white-hatted country star Brad Paisley.

The quirky single was posited as a conversation between Paisley, representing white Southerners, and LL, with Paisley trying to explain the supposedly innocuous intention behind his Confederate flag-branded T-shirt while his New-York-reared counterpart simultaneously tries to understand while also explaining how the symbol makes him feel.

Well-meaning though it was, the song and its race-probing lyrics, including LL's couplet "If you don't judge my do-rag/I won't judge your red flag," touched off a firestorm online — USA Today mused on whether the tune was an "epic fail" while a piece in the Atlantic was headlined Accidental Racist is Actually Just Racist.

Certainly, LL himself noticed the passionate reaction.

"That's the first song that I've ever done that (brought), like, CNN headlines!" the 45-year-old rapper told The Canadian Press in a telephone interview over the weekend with a hearty laugh.

With his new album, Authentic, out today, LL Cool J talks bucking rap trends, ignoring the charts and, yes, the overwhelming response to Accidental Racist.

The album features collaborations with artists across all genres — you've got Eddie Van Halen, Bootsy Collins, Seal, Chuck D of Public Enemy, Tom Morello, Travis Barker, Snoop Dogg, Monica and Brad Paisley, among others. What guided those decisions?

I didn't want any boundaries. I wanted to make a limitless record. Working and hosting the Grammys and being around so many types of great musicians, it really just made me realize how I love all types of music. I wanted to make an album that didn't pigeonhole me in one specific area. I didn't want to make an album that was only for a certain type of people or a certain type of stereotype. I wanted to make an album that music fans would love.

You've said this is the first time you made a record without worrying about charts. Why?

Because, man, if it was all about charts and numbers and airplay and all that stuff, then I would have went and tried to bribe all the youngest, hottest artists to be on the album. In terms of whoever the current top star is, the normal cast of players. But I just feel like that can come off a bit contrived and be a bit incestuous, you know what I'm saying? It just is not where I'm at as an artist. I just felt like, you know what, I'm going to have to take the bull by the horns and make music for myself, and not be concerned with charting and positions and what people think about the scan. I didn't consider any of that. I just made something from the heart.

I wanted to break out of all those moulds and all those boxes we put hip hop records in, and do something special, something that would mean something in 20 years.

Your song with Brad Paisley, Accidental Racist, prompted some really strong reaction, much of it negative. Did you pay attention to it, and what did you make of the response?

Yeah, I paid attention to it. I thought, obviously at the extreme ends of the spectrum, people totally missed the point and just drew the wrong conclusion. I think people in the centre got it and it created a conversation, and caused people to think about that issue. And I think that's a healthy thing for America. I think that it shook up some bruised blood and got people to have a conversation. ... So I have to say man, I think we did our job as artists. It's like the '60s, man. When people made songs, they had to matter. ... I can't guarantee all songs are going to have that kind of whirlwind effect, but it's nice to do something that matters. I'm grateful. THE CANADIAN PRESS

LL still out to impress

"Oh man, I definitely have something to prove. The thing I have to prove is that I can make a great record. ... That'll never go away. I want to show people I have the ability to make great music. I always have something to prove. Without a doubt. And as an artist, all we want to do is see people happy when they listen to the music and know that they enjoy the music. That's a wonderful feeling."

SCENE

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Twitter

@MARLONWAYANS

I feel bad for every chick over 25 in a club ..... Get out of there!!!

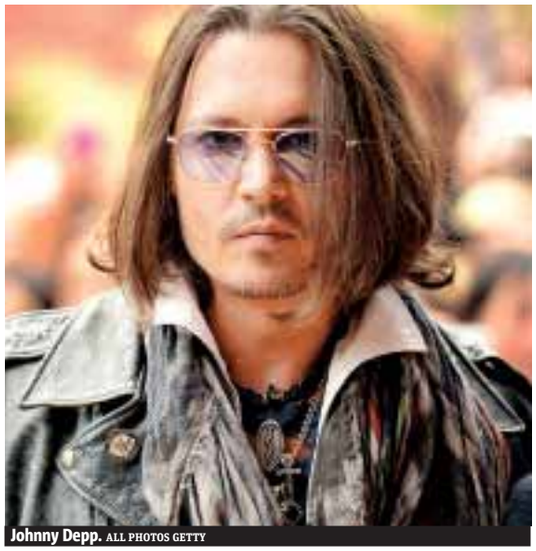
@MissKellyO

If there was an award for a twitter member with the worst spelling/typos i would win it!

Ring-less Eastwood adds fuel to marriage woe gossip

Clint Eastwood

Clint Eastwood's latest fashion choice hasn't helped quell rumours that he and wife Dina are on the outs. The 82-year-old actor and director has been spotted around Los Angeles recently without his wedding ring, according to Radar Online. He also went ring-less when he took 16-year-old daughter Morgan to the Coachella music festival two weeks ago. The couple hasn't been photographed together since November 2011, and Dina has reportedly checked herself into a treatment facility because of depression and anxiety brought on by their marital troubles.



Johnny Depp. ALL PHOTOS GETTY

Are Depp and Rum Diary co-star Heard back on?

It looks like Johnny Depp and his Rum Diary co-star Amber Heard are back together, as the rumoured couple was spotted hand-in-hand at the Rolling Stones' surprise concert at a small Los Angeles club over the weekend, according to E! News. Depp and Heard were rumoured to be dating shortly after Depp's split with his girlfriend of 14 years, Vanessa Paradis, though reps for both parties have refused to comment on the relationship.

The Word

Lopez looking to the future as Idol return talks begin

It turns out that it was Jennifer Lopez herself who initiated the talks last week for her to possibly return to American Idol, replacing her replacement, Mariah Carey, according to Radar Online. "J.Lo had her manager approach Fox to alert them of her interest in rejoining Idol," a source says. "(Her) twins will enter kindergarten in the fall, and stability is important for them — and J.Lo — at this time." But the source is quick to point out that it was never Lopez's idea that she be swapped in for Carey this season as a fix for flagging ratings — a plan that was reportedly pursued and then scuttled when Carey's camp threatened legal action. Lopez was only looking to return next year. "If there was a 'secret plot' to replace Mariah, as has been suggested, then it was all Fox," the source says. "J.Lo's approach was about the future, not the present. She's talking about next season." Carey's contract only covers one season of the reality competition.

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How yoga can help your run

Use your yoga to make you a more complete runner. HANDOUT PHOTO

Fitness. Running isn't just about speed, and this yoga sequence won't make you run faster, but better

ROMINA McGUINNESS
life@metronews.ca

This is what happens to your body when you run

Running is great cardio, but it's not very well rounded, warns Laura Denham-Jones, who teaches a runner's yoga class at London's top health centre, Triyoga.

"As an exercise that requires you to do a repetitive motion, over and over, some muscles are used more than others. The problem, in the long-term, is that if you have some imbalance in the body, like a weak or tight side or a twist in your pelvis, then you're repeatedly doing that same 'out of synch' motion, which will make things worse. Things like your hips and your hamstrings will get tight," she explains.

While it's not so bad to have some tightness in muscles that are supposed to be strong, you'll need to balance out all the work they do.

Why? To prevent injury, warns Denham-Jones.

"If things get too tight, and you then try and do something like increase your stride, you risk to pull your hamstrings. And it's amazing how reluctant runners can be to take time off from their training when they're hurt."

No, yoga will not make you run faster. If that's what you're after, train harder. But what it does offer is injury prevention through stretching and strengthening the body.

"Recovery is crucial; no one should be training hard seven days a week. Yoga, being a practice that helps to decompress the muscles, will draw attention to any quirks in your body. Restoring muscles back to their original length will enable runners to keep their range of motion and strengthen their body," she adds.

Learning to let go of your ego and toes

Yoga is about respecting the body and not being too egotistical.

"It creates a body awareness whereby, when you notice when something is painful, instead of pushing through in a macho kind of way, you learn to take things easy so that you can nip any injuries in the bud, before they blow up. Another benefit is that, as yoga is done bare foot, you can't rely on shoes to support your ankle and so your muscles are doing all the work and they'll inevitably get stronger. You're also stretching the tendons and increasing, suppleness through the foot," says Denham-Jones.

TENSION RELEASING SEQUENCE

Elongate your muscles, lengthen your stride and increase your range of motion

KATHRYN BUDIG, AUTHOR OF THE WOMEN'S HEALTH BIG BOOK OF YOGA

Single Pigeon

Helps to open up the hip flexors and increase range of motion

Crescent Low Lunge

Stretches out the hamstrings and improves balance.

Reclined Big Toe III (with strap)

Stretches the hamstrings, hips, calves and thighs.

Seated Forward Fold (with strap)

Stretches the shoulders, spine and the hamstrings

Downward Facing Dog

Stretches the calves and the hamstrings.

Bound Angle

Releases tension in the hip flexors

FIT 3

Take the difficulty out of scalloped potatoes in 6 steps

MAIJA MOMENTS
YummyMummyClub.ca

Scalloped potatoes are among my favourite kind of potatoes and are the best starchy side dish to ham.

While I admit this side dish typically takes a bit more effort than your typical Canned Soup Mom recipe, I promise this is a simplified version. And because these potatoes always taste better the next day, you can make them the night before.

1. Wash, peel and thinly slice potatoes.

2. Butter 9 x 13 casserole dish. Layer 1/3 potatoes, 1/3 butter, 1 tbsp flour and 1/3 cheese. Repeat (potatoes, butter, flour, cheese).

3. Follow with final layer of potatoes and top with remaining 1/3 butter.

These scalloped potatoes go great with your favourite entree. MAIJA MOMENTS OF YUMMYMUMMYCLUB.CA

4. In a bowl, mix 2% milk, coarse salt and dried mustard or paprika, and pour over top of potatoes.

Ingredients

- 8-10 medium potatoes (Russet or Yukon Gold are best)
- 1/4 cup cold butter, cut into small squares
- 2 tbsp flour
- 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese, divided (old or medium cheddar is best)
- 2 cups 2% milk
- 1 tsp coarse salt
- 1 tsp dried mustard or paprika

5. Cover with tin foil and bake in preheated 350 F oven for 1 – 1 1/2 hours until potatoes are soft and bubbly. Sprinkle with remaining cheese and bake uncovered for another 15 - 20 minutes.

6. Serve with your favourite entree.

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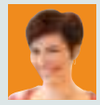
Health Solutions

Digging up health



NUTRI-BITES
Theresa Albert
DHN, RNCP
myfriendinfood.com

Which letter in the alphabet should there be more of? Morels!

Sorry.

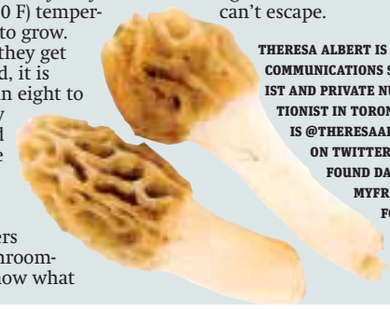
Spring marks the big thaw and the sprouting of luscious things from the earth. Morels come from spores that are carried on the roots of trees and they require loamy, moist soil that is in shade.

Morels tend to come early as they only need a low (50 F) temperature to grow. Once they get started, it is only an eight to 10 day period before they are ready. Hunters and shroomers know what to look for to gather them in the wild, but the novice needs to depend upon farmers markets and grocery stores.

All mushrooms contain trace minerals that fill in the gaps the rest of your diet leaves. Morels serve up vitamin D, copper and iron.

By far the best way to cook them is in a cast iron skillet that has been heated to very high heat. Well rinsed and dried on paper towel, the mushrooms can be added whole after a knob of butter has melted.

Do not crowd the pan. Be sure to let the morels brown rather than steam as they do if they are too close together and the water can't escape.



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Montreal musician Rae Spoon, 32, prefers to be referred to by the pronoun they. J.J. LEVINE

Just call me they

Transgender. Rae Spoon doesn't want to be called she — or he

Canadian singer-songwriter Rae Spoon identifies not as a woman, not as a man, but somewhere in between.

To Spoon, and what appears to be an increasingly vocal minority, gender is "more like a whole galaxy."

Which introduces the problem of pronouns. Spoon says he has expectations of maleness, she of female. So Spoon, 32, likes to be referred to as "they." Others prefer "ze" and "hir" (pronounced "hear") or "per" (short for person).

The last decade has seen the growth of the transgender community. The community includes transsexuals — those who aspire to be the opposite gender of the one they were assigned at birth, and perhaps have surgery and/or hormone treatment to achieve that end. But not all transgender people want to be male or female.

"This might be new for many of us," concedes Sheila Cavanagh, sexuality studies program co-ordinator at York University, "but there is a reluctance to recognize a whole host of ways of being gendered that isn't determined by our bodies. We have to challenge our presumptions that to be a man is to necessarily be masculine and to be a woman is to necessarily be feminine."

Throughout history there have been people who blurred gender roles. Joan of Arc wore masculine dress and is cited as an example of cross-gender activity, and in First Nations there have been gender non-conforming people.

The language around this realm can be confusing. Terms include gender non-conforming, gender-independent, gender-variant and gender-queer, the latter preferred by younger people.

Use of language can be fluid. Ivan Coyote, a writer who sometimes works with Spoon, likes to use "they," but when performing in schools also uses she in self-reference. "I have a fairly masculine presence, so in schools I use 'she' because I want to present as wide a spectrum as possible of what a female-assigned person or she person can look like."

How does Coyote want to be referred to for this story? "An artist. Author of 10 books. An activist with youth. A human being. A musician. I'm so many more things than my gender and so much more than someone who doesn't fit into a gender box."

Why is it so important? "I'm walking down the street and a guy follows me in his truck for three blocks and pulls over to ask if I am a man or a woman. That happens to me every day — some version of trying to figure out what gender I am, how much respect he has ... and whether he's allowed to feel sexual attraction ... and he does not know how to relate to me until he can understand what gender I am."

Another question: Has Coyote had sex-reassignment surgery? Why ask, Coyote responds. "If you don't fit into the gender binary, it's acceptable to ask if you had surgery when they are really asking about your genitals. You wouldn't ask a woman if she had breast surgery."

We can try, for the purposes of this story, to refer to Spoon as they. It's not easy. Spoon, who was raised as a girl in an evangelical family in Calgary and now lives in Montreal, came out as transgender 10 years ago and started using the pronoun "he" instead of "she." But now, they felt there were certain expectations that came with male identity. "Even in the queer community, there would be pressure," they said. "You are supposed to do male things. As if you are expected to earn your pronoun..."

On the other hand, there were encounters with people who said Spoon was a woman. "'You have hips.' 'You don't have facial hair' or 'Your voice is high.' But not one of those things makes you male or female."

There were further probing questions: Why not have surgery or hormone therapy — which Spoon has not — to look male/masculine. Now Spoon chooses to use "they."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

He vs. She vs. They

"Gender expectation comes out of sexism. Coming out using the 'they' pronoun is refusing to accept a role. Anyone can refuse it." Canadian singer-songwriter Rae Spoon

Neither gender

Australia and New Zealand now allow citizens to be neither male nor female on their passports. Canada and the U.K. are considering a similar move.

Be socially conscious and look good doing it

The tragic collapse of a Bangladeshi garment factory, which has claimed more than 350 lives, has brought renewed focus to the manufacturing practices of brands that sell affordable goods for mass consumption. While low-priced garments may prove alluring, there has been a growing movement among many to be more mindful in their buying habits. Dara O'Rourke, a professor at the University of California, Berkeley, and the co-founder of GoodGuide, an online resource that provides information about the health, environmental and social performance of companies, gives his advice. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Get educated

In its online resource Shopping for Change, World Vision Canada offers suggestions for places consumers can consult such as GoodGuide and Fairtrade Canada to find out more about companies and their practices, said Cheryl Hotchkiss, senior manager of advocacy and public engagement. But the education process doesn't end there.

"I think if you're a consumer of a product and you want to find out more information about that product, it's really best for you to be directly in touch with the company that made the product," said Hotchkiss, who is also manager of World Vision's End Child Slavery campaign.

Hold companies accountable

O'Rourke said the big challenge for consumers is to go beyond the information on tags and ask retailers and brands to disclose where products are made, including details on factories and subcontractors.

"We really can't in this day and age, in 2013, we can't have the situation where high-tech, super-smart, global multinational brands and retailers literally don't know where their products are being manufactured. That's just not acceptable."

Beyond making inquiries in stores, consumers should also use public forums to ask questions about company practices, he added.

Shop local

Even if a garment says it's manufactured in Canada, the components of the item could come from elsewhere, said Brenna Donoghue, president of marketing for Ethical Ocean, a Toronto-based online marketplace for fairly traded, organic and eco-friendly products.

"The tricky thing is when you're shopping in really big stores, getting that information is quite hard," she said. "You can obviously find out the country that manufactured it on the label, but finding out where the components came from is often not knowledge that the staff has.

Check certifications

Donoghue said while buying clothing, she tries to seek out garments made of fabrics like organic cotton — and not just because it's environmentally friendly.

"I know that the workers that are growing that cotton in the first place aren't being exposed to really atrocious chemicals, and often, when something is organic it also comes fair trade," she said.

"The great thing about that combination is that you know that the company is paying fairly for those items, and as well, you can trust that it's not filled with chemicals that will make you sick."

Buy secondhand

... or be prepared to possibly spend more. Donoghue said there are many ways to make inexpensive purchases when it comes to socially responsible shopping.

"It can be really cheap to go and buy a pair of jeans at Walmart or any big-box store like that. Similarly, you can go down the street to a thrift store and buy a pair of jeans even cheaper," she said. "You're helping the environment by doing so, and that can actually save you quite a bit of money."

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Lessons from Boston and Texas

YOUR MONEY
Alison Griffiths
money@metronews.ca

The recent tragedies in Boston and in West, Texas, are reminders that disaster can hit with the speed and force of a tornado.

Similar, if somewhat less dramatic, events happen daily and range from death, divorce and illness to unemployment and acts of God. What these incidents have in common is that they're rarely predictable and usually have financial repercussions.

In light of the two U.S. catastrophes, this might be a good time for readers to take a hard look at their lives. Ask yourself what you appreciate about yours and what you can do to improve things. This isn't about a total makeover, more a gentle review.

Consider the following:

Your abode: What do you like about where you live? Can you improve your quarters? It could be something as simple as a bit of paint, hanging a print on the wall or getting a few cheerful plants. If costs are crushing you perhaps there is an alternative.

Your job: Do you feel stuck? What aspects are rewarding? If you don't like what you do, are there ways to change it to increase your satisfaction, even if it means less money?

Your commute: I love walking down the hall to work! You might not be so lucky, but for some commuting is actually a source of down time. If you enjoy a few hours of reading the paper on the train or listening to music in your car, remind yourself that this is a positive aspect of each day.

Life outside work: Do you have one? Is there something that feeds your soul and is unrelated to life's many obligations? It doesn't have to be expensive.

Spend on what you love: Try to eliminate anything that doesn't reward you. We shell out huge amounts in mindless haste. Slow down and ask yourself if spending that dollar really enhances your life.

Witnessing tragedies as happened in Boston and Texas is a reminder of our fragility. Examining how we spend and live gives us control over and appreciation of whatever years are available.

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NHL Playoffs

Habs-Sens series could stoke rivalry

A tough battle awaits Montreal against the Ottawa Senators in the NHL playoffs, but the Canadiens will gladly take it after what happened last year.

The Canadiens were dead last in the Eastern Conference a year ago and by late April were well into their off-season routines. Now they face a best-of-seven conference quarter-final against their closest geographical rival.

"We're still playing hockey," defenceman P.K. Subban said Monday. We're privileged to do that, but we worked hard to put ourselves in that position and now we'll work hard to keep playing. We know what the ultimate goal is."

Montreal will face the seventh-place Senators in the playoffs for the first time, with the opening two games at the Bell Centre on Thursday and Friday night before moving to Ottawa for Game 3 on Sunday. The teams have never really had a heated rivalry, but that may change when they meet in the post-season.

The Senators were missing four key elements for much of the season in Anderson and defencemen Erik Karlsson and Jared Cowen — who all recently returned to the lineup — and still-sidelined centre Jason Spezza.

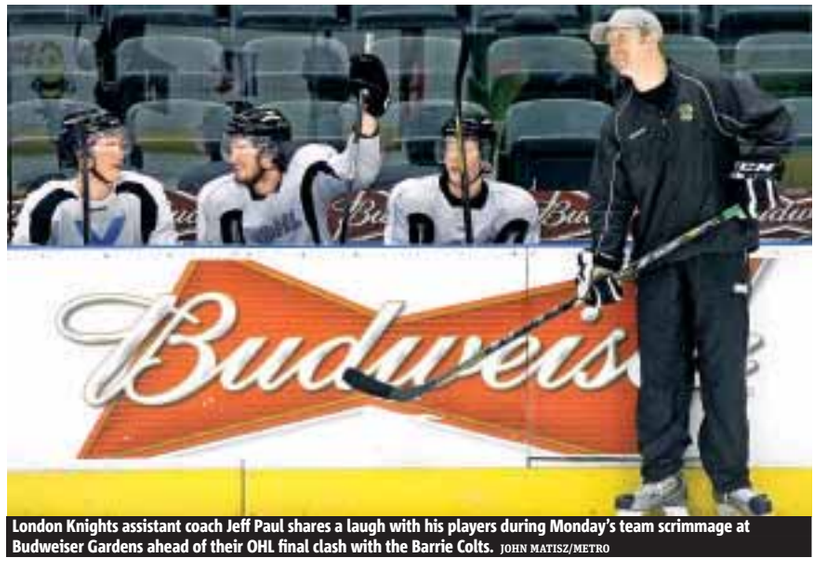
Montreal has three scoring lines and the league's fourth best power play (20.7 per cent) built around point men Subban and Andrei Markov, although Ottawa counters with the NHL's best penalty-killing unit (88 per cent).

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Knights, Colts will joust in OHL final

CHL. London hit the ice for a Monday practice, yet to learn of their playoff fate with Barrie

JOHN MATISZ
john.matisz@metronews.ca



London Knights assistant coach Jeff Paul shares a laugh with his players during Monday's team scrimmage at Budweiser Gardens ahead of their OHL final clash with the Barrie Colts. JOHN MATISZ/METRO

The London Knights held a light practice at Budweiser Gardens Monday afternoon while its Ontario Hockey League championship series opponent remained unknown.

It was a leisurely day at the rink, the last non-serious workout in the lead-up to Friday's series opener.

Hours later, though, the playoff switch was flipped and it was game on.

The Barrie Colts defeated the Belleville Bulls, 3-1, in Game 7 of the Eastern Conference final series Monday night, setting up the first ever London-Barrie playoff match-up.

Coincidentally, the Knights, Colts, and Windsor Spitfires are the three organizations who have submitted a bid to host the 2014 Memorial Cup. A winner will be announced next week.

"Barrie has a few high-profile forwards. It'll be a tough challenge," Knights captain Scott Harrington said following practice.

An Eastern Conference team has won the J. Ross Robertson Cup only once in the past decade. Aside from the 2006 Peterborough Petes, the OHL's holy grail has lived in the west, including twice in London (2012, 2005).

This season, Barrie has a dynamic lineup, which features an excellent top six forward group — a key figure being Andreas Athanasious, who requested a trade out of London last August — along with a veteran goaltender, and solid defence.

Through three rounds, the club's one-two punch — Winnipeg Jets prospect Mark Scheifele (27 points in 15 games) and linemate Zach Hall (19 points in 12 games) — has made life difficult for opposing goalies.

"Those guys have lots of experience," Harrington added. "You just have to be sharp to make their lives a lot more difficult."

London's Anthony Stolarz has never been tasked with stopping the Colts offence. But since joining the Knights mid-season, the 19-year-old has a .971 save percentage and a 3-0 record in games versus Eastern Conference teams.

The eastern domination is not Stolarz-centric. The Knights were nearly unbeatable this year against east opponents, going 18-2 overall and 10-0 at home. Barrie lost 3-2 and 5-3 to London.

Also on Tuesday, the OHL handed Colts defenceman Jake Dotchin a five-game ban after he delivered a headcheck to a Belleville player in Game 6.

Knights-Colts Schedule

- Game 1: Friday at London, 7:05 p.m.
- Game 2: Sunday at London, 2:05 p.m.
- Game 3: Tues, May 7 at Barrie, 7:05 p.m.
- Game 4: Wed, May 8 at Barrie, 7:05 p.m.
- Games 5 to 7, if necessary: Fri, May 10 at London, 7:05 p.m.; Sun, May 12 at Barrie, 2:05 p.m.; Mon, May 13 at London, 7:05 p.m.

Bruins have the upper hand against Leafs

Diagnosed with an 'upper body injury,' Tyler Bozak, left, skates during a Maple Leafs practice on Monday in Toronto. COLIN MCCONNELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Tyler Bozak hardly practised, Phil Kessel didn't speak and Nazem Kadri crashed the net, literally, at the Leafs training centre on Monday.

The playoffs haven't even started yet, but already there are no shortage of storylines surrounding Maple Leafs.

Toronto (26-17-5) makes its long-awaited return to the post-season on Wednesday in Boston with coach Randy Carlyle declaring the fifth-seeded Leafs the underdog against the fourth-seeded Bruins.

General manager Dave Nonis agreed that Boston (28-14-6) enters the series as favourite.

"I don't think that that means anything," he added. "You can term a team the underdog but you have to play the games."

Carlyle was more concerned about his team than the Bruins, saying the Leafs have to get back to playing their style of hockey — skating, forechecking, clearing the defensive zone and relying on special teams.

Not all the pieces for success are in place, though.

Bozak has missed the last two games with an upper body injury — observers point to a possible shoulder injury in last Wednesday's game against Tampa Bay. Carlyle called him day-to-day.

There were some anxious moments when Kadri went flying into the goal on a drill. He continued practising but paused briefly to have a trainer but a bandage near his hip.

Kessel has been quizzed repeatedly about Boston and his struggle to excel against them. The Bruins have put hulking defenceman Zdeno Chara on the ice whenever Kessel jumps over the boards — to great effect.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

4 SPORTS

Washington Wizards centre Jason Collins rebounds against the Bulls on April 17 in Chicago. JONATHAN DANIEL/GETTY IMAGES

NBA vet Jason Collins comes out as gay

'I'm raising my hand.' 34-year-old centre's announcement immediately draws support from NBA, athletes in other sports

With the simplest of sentences, NBA veteran Jason Collins set aside years of worry and silence to become the first active male player in one of four major U.S. professional sports leagues to come out as gay.

In a first-person article posted Monday on Sports Illustrated's website, Collins begins: "I'm a 34-year-old NBA centre. I'm black. And I'm gay."

Collins has played for six teams in 12 seasons, most recently as a reserve with the Washington Wizards after a trade from the Boston Celtics. He is now a free agent and wants to keep playing.

"I wish I wasn't the kid in the classroom raising his hand and saying, 'I'm different,'" Collins writes. "If I had my way, someone else would have already done this. Nobody has, which is why I'm raising my hand."

Saying he had "endured years of misery" Collins immediately drew support for his announcement from the White House, the NBA, current and former teammates and athletes in other sports.

Los Angeles Lakers star Kobe Bryant tweeted that he was proud of Collins, writing: "Don't suffocate who u r because of the ignorance of others."

"We've got to get rid of the shame. That's the main thing. And Jason's going to help that. He's going to help give people courage to come out," said Billie Jean King, a member of the International Tennis Hall of Fame who confirmed she was gay in the early 1980s.

The Wizards issued a statement from President Ernie Grunfeld: "We are extremely proud of Jason and support his decision to live his life proudly and openly. He has been a leader on and off the court and an outstanding teammate throughout his NBA career. Those qualities will continue to serve him both as a player and as a positive role model for others of all sexual orientation."

Collins' coach with the Celtics, Doc Rivers, drew a comparison between Monday's announcement and Jackie Robinson's role when he joined the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947 as the first black player in Major League Baseball.

"If you have learned anything from Jackie Robinson, it is that teammates are always the first to accept. It will be society who has to learn tolerance," Rivers said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

D.C. applauds Collins

The White House is commending Collins for his decision to come out as gay.

- First Lady Michelle Obama took to Twitter Monday to applaud Collins: "So proud of you, Jason Collins! This is a huge step forward for our country. We've got your back!" the tweet read.
- White House spokesman Jay Carney called the decision courageous and says he hopes Collins' colleagues will offer support.
- Former U.S. President Bill Clinton said Collins' announcement is an "important moment" for professional sports and the LGBT community.

MLB

Laffey chooses free agency over triple-A

Left-hander Aaron Laffey has chosen to become a free agent rather than report to the Toronto Blue Jays' triple-A affiliate in Buffalo.

The Blue Jays announced the decision Monday. Laffey made one start for Toronto after being claimed on waivers from the New York Mets on April 23.

Laffey, 28, did not record a decision in his lone appearance last Friday and was designated for assignment the next day. He allowed two earned runs over 2 2/3 innings in a 6-4 loss to the Yankees in New York.

In five games this season with the Blue Jays and Mets, Laffey was 0-0 with a 7.11 ERA.

Laffey made 16 starts for the Blue Jays last season. He went 4-6 with a 4.56 ERA in 22 games.

Laffey has a career record of 25-29 with a 4.45 ERA over 153 appearances. He has also played for the Yankees, Cleveland Indians and Seattle Mariners. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Tebow Time comes to an end in New York

Tebow Time is off the clock.

Tim Tebow was waived by the Jets on Monday, the end of an unsuccessful one-season experiment in New York that had been expected for months.

"Unfortunately, things did not work out the way we all had hoped," coach Rex Ryan said in a statement by the team in announcing the move.

The Heisman Trophy winner attempted just eight passes after his ballyhooed arrival in a surprising trade from the Denver Broncos in March 2012. He threw for 39 yards and rushed 32 times for 102 yards — and stunningly had no touchdowns as a member of the Jets.

Meanwhile, starter Mark Sanchez struggled amid constant questions about Tebow's playing time, and still Tebow remained mostly on the sideline. The Jets and new general manager John Idzik drafted former West Virginia star Geno Smith in the second round of the NFL draft Friday, giving New York six quarterbacks on its roster — and creating uncertainty about Sanchez's future as well.

Tebow arrived at the team's facility in Florham Park, N.J., on Monday morning and was told he had been cut.

Quarterback Tim Tebow was waived by the New York Jets on Monday. GETTY IMAGES

"Tim is an extremely hard worker, evident by the shape he came back in this off-season," Ryan said. "We wish him the best moving forward."

Tebow took to Twitter a few hours later, citing a Bible verse: "Proverbs 3:5-6: Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding," Tebow wrote, "in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight."

What about the CFL?

The Montreal Alouettes would welcome Tim Tebow to the CFL — provided he's willing to compete for a job as a backup quarterback.

- "If Tim Tebow wants to come to Canada we'd definitely welcome him. That's why we have him on our neg list and we'd take a look at him and see if he can play in Canada, but it would obviously be competing for a backup job," Alouettes general manager Jim Popp said.

While everyone from Johnson to Ryan to former general manager Mike Tannenbaum to former offensive co-ordinator Tony Sparano said they were all "on board" with Tebow, it became evident early that he had no clear role, and Tebow simply didn't impress enough in practice to earn more playing time.

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Jumping for joy

Andreas Weimann of Aston Villa celebrates as his side scores during a Premier League match against Sunderland on Monday in Birmingham, England. With a 6-1 win, Villa moved five points clear of Wigan in the final relegation place. LAURENCE GRIFFITHS/GETTY IMAGES

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Sometimes it is right to be selfish and this is one such occasion. Put your own needs first today and don't worry that some people might not like it. What matters is that your efforts are for your benefit.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Make an effort to see the good in people rather than the bad today. There is a piece of the divine spark in every human being, though sometimes you have to dig deep to find it.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
You may be the life of the party most of the time, but you need your private moments too and you definitely need some time and space to yourself today. Keep in touch with the inner you, the real you.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Look at your life as it is, think of your life as you want it to be then start working on things that will take you from here to there by the straightest line and in the quickest time.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Don't follow the herd. Some people like their lives to be predictable and boring but that isn't for you. You're a Leo and Leos were born to be creators — and lovers too.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Don't worry about how you are going to reach your long-term goals. Cosmic activity in the sympathetic sign of Taurus is guiding you in the right direction and protecting every step you make. Believe it.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Your mind is full of big ideas at the moment but do you have the necessary talent to do something with them? Of course you do. Select one major aim for the month of May and work on it every single day.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You may be tempted to go back on something you decided to do because the going is tougher than you expected but that would be a mistake. The toughest part will be followed by the easiest part.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Just because you are working harder than ever does not mean you will accomplish more. In fact, if the planets are to be believed, you are on the point of exhausting yourself for no good reason.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Everyone needs rules to live by but that does not mean you have to follow someone else's rules, especially if they don't feel right to you. Make your own rules today and be brave enough to live by them.

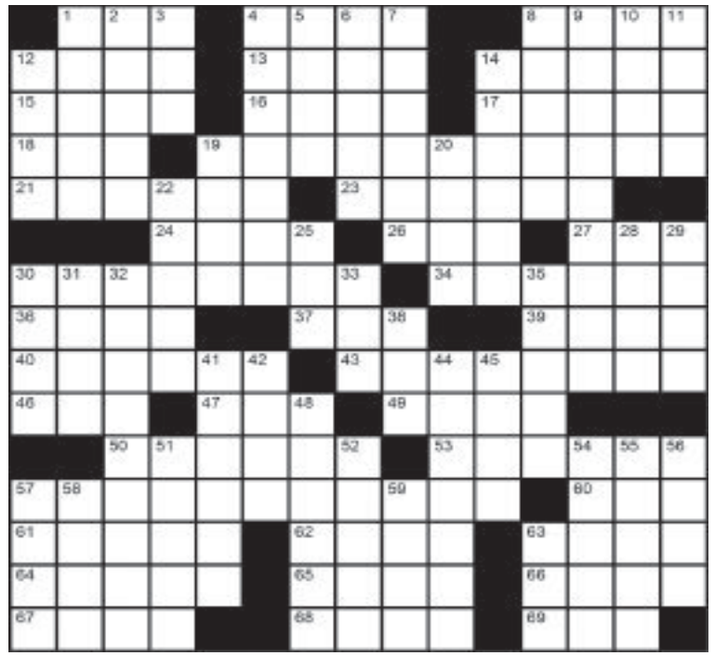
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You feel a bit out of touch at the moment. The prevailing mood among your friends is different to what you feel. So what? The world is big enough for all sorts of feelings.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Try not to complicate matters today. There are no hidden meanings or motives in what other people say and do, so stop worrying. SALLY ROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



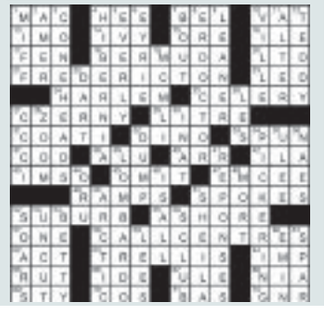
Across

1. Crash Test Dummies song, when repeated
4. "Phooey!" [pl.]
8. House: Spanish
12. Frolic
13. Parkay, for one
14. Type of mil. mission
15. Once, poetically
16. Actor, __ Patrick Harris
17. Brit singer Mr. John
18. Univ. web address word, sometimes
19. Midnight, April 30th: 2 wds.
21. Bow
23. "Whose Line Is It Anyway?" specialty
24. Medium, on a label
26. Toronto Raptors org.
27. Medit. locale
30. Canadian History: Farmer of New France
34. Rustling sounding
36. Old†Testament book after Genesis, for short
37. Figure skater Ms. Babilonia
39. Ancient portico
40. Sources of strength
43. Sherlock Holmes sidekick: 2 wds.
46. Mode's intro: 2 wds.
47. 'Human' suffix
49. New Zealand fruit
50. Canadian ice dancing champs, Tessa __ & Scott Moir
53. Tortilla treats
57. "The Kids in the Hall" character: 2 wds.
60. Li'l baseball official
61. WWII Riveter
62. Prefix with 'globin'
63. Prefix to 'dextrous'
64. Vows-exchanging spot
65. From square one
66. Filth
67. "__ Girls" (2004)
68. Mr. von Sydow's on
69. 'Conc' completer (Acknowledge defeat).

Down

1. Tuesday: French
2. Canadian fast food chain: 2 wds.
3. Shopping estab.
4. Western series Ottawa-born actor Lorne Greene starred
5. Author Mr. Haley
6. Swiss character in literature
7. Seriously sincere
8. Yo-Yo Ma's instrument
9. Protest participants, perhaps
10. Coming __ to a theatre near you...
11. Ms. Hathaway
12. Scornful look
14. Sketch again
19. "Hop __ __!" (Move!)
20. Some police alerts, for short
22. Where the hit song (usually) wasn't, __ __
25. 'Differ' suffix
28. "Vamoose!"
29. Meg of movies
30. "__ _ Rebel" by The Crystals
31. Botanical leaf-to-stem angle
32. Cape __, Nfld.
33. Smidgen
35. 'Real' suffix
38. Bother
41. Employee
42. Locale
44. Microsoft operating system
45. Out
48. Lena of HBO's "Girls"
51. 'Beaut' suffix
52. Nina Dobrev's "The Vampire Diaries" dual role, __/Katherine
54. Sauna-like weather
55. Darker-to-lighter highlights
56. BBQ rod
57. Study hard
58. Courtney Love band
59. Charge card, commonly
63. 'Block' suffix

Yesterday's Crossword



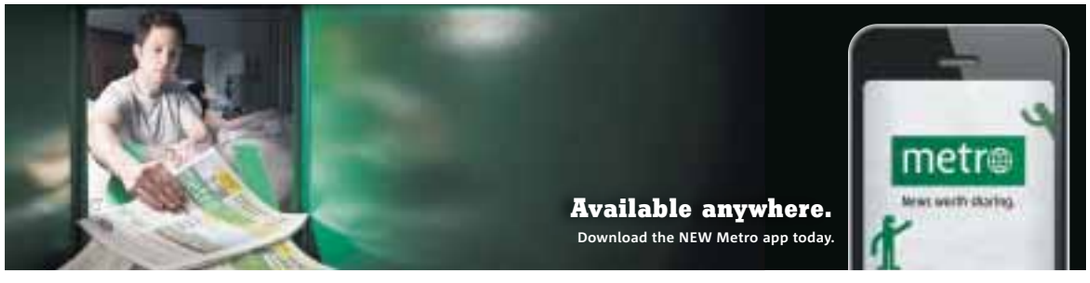
Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

8	5		7				1	3
3	6		1		4	2		
		7			5			8
5						6	2	
6			2		1			9
	9	1						5
7			5			1		
		8	4		2		7	6
9	2				7		8	4

Yesterday's Sudoku

7	8	5	6	2	1	3	9	4
6	9	3	8	5	4	7	2	1
4	2	1	9	7	3	6	8	5
8	1	6	4	3	9	2	5	7
2	3	7	1	8	5	4	6	9
9	5	4	7	6	2	1	3	8
1	4	2	3	9	8	5	7	6
5	7	8	2	1	6	9	4	3
3	6	9	5	4	7	8	1	2



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LOS ANGELES vs ST. LOUIS 8 PM*

TOMORROW

SCOTIABANK HOCKEY TONIGHT 6:30 PM
TORONTO vs BOSTON 7 PM

THURSDAY

SCOTIABANK HOCKEY TONIGHT 6:30 PM
OTTAWA vs MONTREAL 7 PM
LOS ANGELES vs ST. LOUIS 9:30 PM

*All games available for online streaming.
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